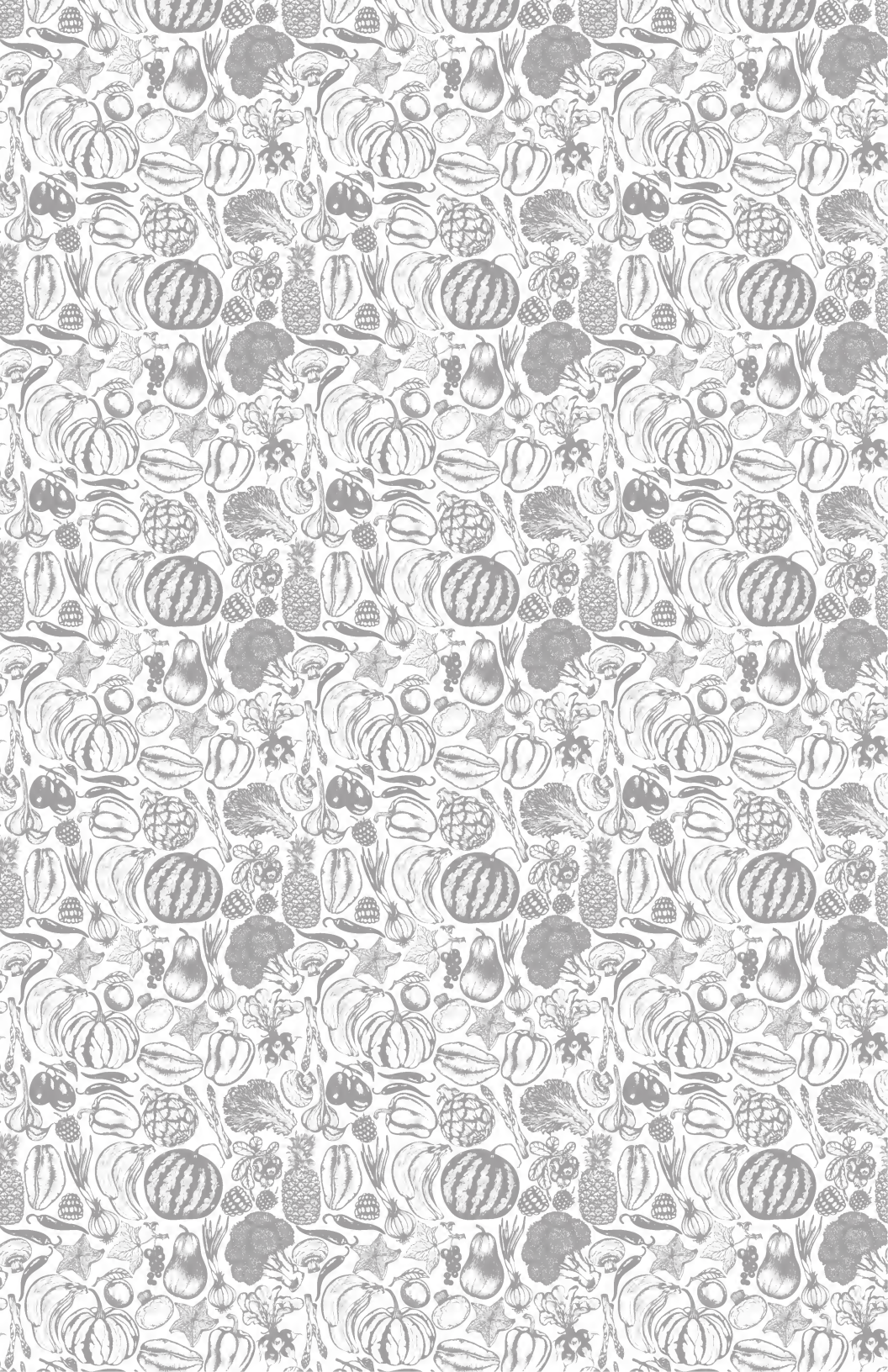




# Eugene AVANT GARDENERS

SUMMER ISSUE • 2017







## FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

is the right of people to healthy  
and culturally-appropriate food,  
produced through ecologically sound  
and sustainable methods,  
and their right to define their own  
food and agriculture systems



# GROWING PAINS

By Plaedo

How did we get here, to this point in our history? How did we drain half the world's wetlands in the last 30 years? How have we cut down so much rainforest and old growth forest? Why does the average meal travel 1,500 miles from farm to fork? As the climate continues to change and the political situation in our country and around the world continues to deteriorate, many of us find ourselves asking, how do we get back?



What would that look like, that mythical garden of Eden? And in all reality, things will probably never be the same on this here Earth, at least in our lifetimes. But that vague yearning still exists, that questioning, how do we create something better? Something less insane, more sustainable? Something more connected and meaningful?

In a world gone mad, I've gone to the garden. There, I, and others like me, we fellow Avant Gardeners, believe in finding our 'family'—our family around the farm—and giving back to the land. We believe through our gardening techniques, we can heal the land plot by plot. And we believe that by coming together and learning to collaborate, we can heal our relationships and establish communities of support.

So much has been lost. So much more is at risk, and the world endlessly keeps turning, so may we make best use of the time, energy, and resources we have left. May we meet each other in the garden. May we use our tears of grief to fertilize our intention for the future. And may we regrow what our hearts know is possible. 🌻

# How to host an **AVANT GARDENER** work party

by Better Shacks & Gardens

Greetings Gardeners! Any time of year is a good time to put work into your garden. We can help each other and many hands make light work. You can host an Avant Gardener work party any way you want to, but here are some pointers and a few ideas that may help.



**Make a Facebook event.** A single post to the Avant Gardener page is often not enough. Choose a date about two weeks out. That's enough time for people to plan, but not so far out that they will forget or lose interest.



**Upload a good photo.** Use an image that's related to the project you'll be working on. Bonus if you can think of an interesting, fun or descriptive thing to call your work party. (Kale Harvesting! Weed Wars! Mulchpalooza!)



**Choose a specific time of day.** A good length of time for a work party is about 2 or 3 hours. Having people show up at the same time makes the work go farther. Set an end time. Knowing when to stop will help workers pace themselves.



**Give a location.** If you can't publish the address, do include the general neighborhood, and include your contact info too, so folks can reach you for the address.



**Tell about the project you are seeking help with.** If there is a goal in mind, share it. If the work is to benefit a charity or worthy organization, talk about that.



**What about gear?** Let people know if they need to bring anything like tools or gloves, and how to dress for the work at hand. Check the weather and let folks know if they need to dress warmly or in cool clothing, or if they should wear hats or other protective gear, or if they will be getting wet or muddy.



**Send the event invite.** Invite specific people you know AND post the event to *Eugene Avant Gardeners* on Facebook, with a little intro summarizing the event.



**Send reminders.** Remind folks a week, 3 days, and the night before. Say new things in each reminder. (We got fresh mulch! Someone's bringing homebrewed beer! Music jam afterward, bring instruments!) Build some interest and anticipation.



**Find one or two work party buddies.** These are supportive folk who commit to be there no matter who else shows. Contact them directly and invite them to co-host. You can find these people first, then plan the work party around their schedule. Have your buddies RSVP on your FB page. Personal invitations outside of Facebook (via phone, text, email, or in person) work well.

**TIP:** *Stick to the plan and work on your project with your work party buddy even if attendance is low. It keeps momentum going on your project. If nobody turned up, have another work party. Sometimes people who missed the first one will come to another, or might be encouraged to learn that your project is still going. People like to help at locations they've been to before. Consistency and reliability fosters community.*



**Keep your workers hydrated.** This is vital! Ask folks to bring their own water bottles and show them where to refill. Remind them to drink deeply and remind them often. If you want to be fancy, you can serve water with cucumber slices, mint leaves or borage flowers in it. Or make sun tea. Properly hydrated bodies work longer, and feel better. People are happier when hydrated. With intake is output! Don't forget to let your workers know where bathrooms are, or tell them if/where it's ok to pee outside. (Uric acid is good for the land!) Repeat the hydration/urination orientation for late arrivals.



**Feed people.** It's good magic. Work parties that include lunch or even just snacks with coffee/chai/tea/beer will attract attendance and repeat attendance. It's wonderful to sit and eat together after working. Yes, this is a big commitment, but it keeps people coming, if you can do it. Sharing food fosters bonds! Plus, feeding those who help you grow your food is just a good thing to do, you know? And a little gesture goes a long way, so you don't have to overdo it. Simple pot of rice with Bragg's? Some lentils? Fruit plate? Carrot sticks with hummus? Or just sliced apples. I usually cook soup or lentils the night before to reheat the day of, so I can spend more time outside with the group and less time in the kitchen.



**Have a plan.** Have tools and gloves ready, or borrow some ahead of time. You can ask your guests to bring tools too. Explain to people what you're doing and tell them your goals. Don't be afraid to delegate as needed; your work party guests came to help! Your preparedness helps people to feel effective, competent and good about themselves. They will also have more confidence in your project. That's good juju for your garden!



**Make it a party!** Play music! Serve cool beverages! Maybe give it a fun theme, or ask everyone to wear silly hats! Sing songs! Have a fire or meal after, to nourish your workers' spirits. Put out blankets or chairs nearby for people to rest upon in between tasks. Keep momentum going but keep expectations flexible. Have fun!



**Lastly, *Gratitude*.** Don't forget to thank your work party the following day. A friendly post to the Avant Gardener page with a little summary of what you did—and maybe even photos—helps people feel connected and reaffirms the validity of the work. It also encourages others. So many of us are working on so many good projects in this crazy, beautiful, messed-up world. We want to hear from you!

Good luck and have fun out there, beloved Gardeners! Your work is important. 🌱



# The Goose and the Common

17th century protest against English enclosure

—❖—  
The law locks up the man or woman  
Who steals the goose from off the common  
But leaves the greater villain loose  
Who steals the common from off the goose.

The law demands that we atone  
When we take things we do not own  
But leaves the lords and ladies fine  
Who take things that are yours and mine.

The law locks up the man or woman  
Who steals the goose from off the common  
And geese will still a common lack  
Until they go and steal it back.





# GINKGO BILoba

The Ginkgo Biloba Tree is a true symbol of resiliency. This species of tree, with no close living relatives, has survived basically unchanged since the time of the dinosaurs, with a single tree able to live upwards of 1,000 years. It is a tree so resilient, when the United States dropped that terrible atomic bomb on Hiroshima, 6 Ginkgo trees situated near the blast center appeared to bud after the blast without major deformations and are still alive today!

It has long been said that a Ginkgo leaf looks like half a hemisphere of a human brain. Perhaps that it is no coincidence that Ginkgo Biloba has a illustrious history as a brain boosting herb.

Ginkgo Biloba improves blood flow to the brain and people have traditionally taken it to enhance memory, boost mental clarity, and improve attention. The Chinese have also long used Ginkgo to improve kidney and lung function. 🌱

*To make a Ginkgo tea, simply steep some leaves in hot water for about 10 minutes.*

*Midday Mental Uplifting Tea:  
Ginkgo, Rosemary, sage,  
mint and nettle.*



# LIVING THE (The

By Haddy Yosef

Sitting in the garden  
Smitten, growing with the plants  
Feeding on the Sun  
Heart beating, flowing with the Cosmic Dance;

There's an elegance that can only be found in Nature  
Undulations of fine repose, a smile hidden within plain sight  
Available to all, beyond creed or stature,  
With the only entrance fee being empathy.

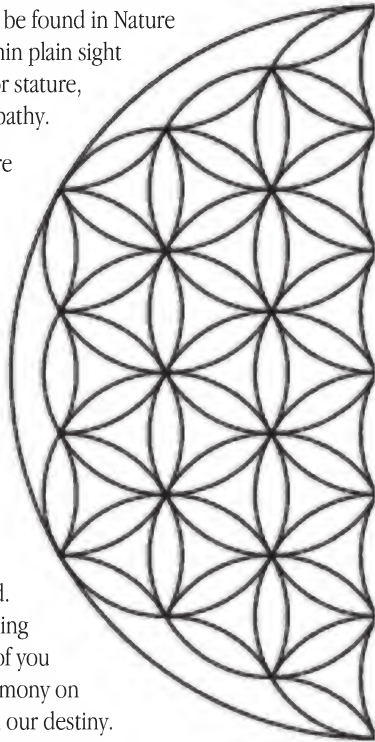
Healed within the engagement of its rapture  
Purified and reawakened,  
changing course beyond the eddying source of the forsaken.

And for every future moment taken  
The choice is made to alleviate the aching  
The souls in woe, regaining their control,  
Immersed again in Tao flow.

We need to seek the simplicity  
Embrace its beauty  
It leaves room for everything  
Living levity free of the baggage carried  
Synchronized, realized by the truth uncompromised.

Living the medicine, taking toxins to be jettisoned.  
Humanity please, remember soon, I am begging  
Each and every one of you  
Do no harm, keep the harmony on  
It's time to sound the alarm, and fulfill our destiny.

This is our time, yes, to realign  
Remembering our dormant truth  
Without doubt, now absolute, stop waiting for a sign.

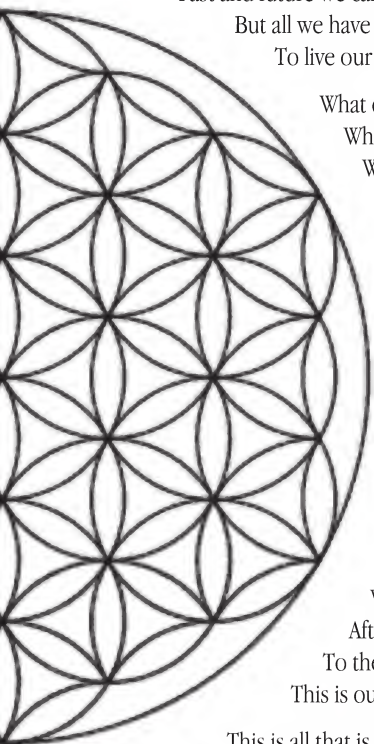


# MEDICINE

## Process)

It's Now, the only thing we can be sure of is  
Now

All else is just a memory, harboring karmic energy  
Past and future we can reflect,  
But all we have is the pulsing Now  
To live our truths and live them loud.



What does it mean to be set free?  
When we are the ones enabling our captivity?  
What does it mean when we hold the keys?  
But pause, afraid to see what's on the other side?

Nothing to fear, only the illusions disappear  
Truth and place and Self and purpose, all made crystal clear  
The apprehension is from the tension clenching from letting go  
But I am here to mention,  
that your ascension is yours to behold  
So please let go, trust the elders and let go.

Submit to the alchemical process as it undergoes,  
Feel and stay clear through all that it reveals,  
Feel the dissolution, as for the problem to be solved  
The lead must first be dissolved.

Where water and fire to combine to awaken aether sublime  
After having purified the calcined,  
To the heavens and back to rejoin as One.  
This is our process, our separation from illusion and return to self.

This is all that is needed to heal the world;  
The rest follows close in its wake;  
Fess up, then bless up,  
The future is ours to make. 🌀



# GATEWAY TO A GOOD LIFE

By Isabella Jib

It has been said that the small farming I often promote contains the seed of the industrialization we see destroying our biosphere. I agree, that's true if we go at it the same old way.

People say that not everyone has room in their yard for a cow, and that it would be bad if everyone tried to keep one. That is also true. But a lot of people have room for chickens.

Today my old response to that point emerges with a new companion.

If the grocery shelves were empty, far worse than people returning to small farming wherever possible would be everyone going out to 'live off the land.' The tattered remnants of the web of life desperately need to be left alone in order to recover.

Acreage of food production maintained by human hands produces 7 times the yield produced by mechanically tended crops, according to something I read in the '70's. Diet for a Small Planet, perhaps. Hand-worked gardens can be multi-crop companion planting. Their products don't require packaging, nor petro-fueled transportation to the kitchen. Maintaining gardens by hand gives people meaningful work, exercise, and opportunities for meditation.

The idea that's new today is that we may be well served by stepping back through styles of cohabitation with other species in the biosphere gradually, taking with us knowledge of our errors expressed in conscious decisions to move always toward lifestyles which physically promote other beings' ability to live.

That's a long sentence. Although I get resentful of reiterative writing, perhaps I'll try again.

The pat phrase is 'live simply that others may simply live.' My version counts among those others the nonhuman, both plant and animal, insects as well as cute mammals. I might even count them more heavily on the scale, since most of them can't defend themselves.

At this point I think the strongest help we can be in healing the planet would be to take care of as many of our own needs as we can. Transporting ourselves with the strength of our bodies, (which would be strong enough for most of it if we did it, and didn't go so far). Growing food in our yards if we can. Pushing a carpet sweeper instead of vacuuming.

Regarding the small farming, I feel it would be good to to enhance diversity in the animal



sphere of our immediate vicinity even as we go from a lawn with a few shrubs and a tree or two to the many species represented in a vegetable garden.

By revesting the earth we walk from our homes to the neighbours' turf with other

species of animal life, we reinstate some of the chemical interactions which maintain the web of life. Pesky slug becomes protein and soil amendment—and powers our soil aerating self-propelled weed whacker to boot!

*Continued on next page*

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We can take our lifestyles and their supporting infrastructure forward to include a healthy habitat and beauty everywhere. No one should live in garden-less slums, unemployed, feeling bored and undervalued.

It's a long walk from here to a healthy way of life for all of us, and I feel a return to small farming wherever possible is a step along the way. 90% of us used to live in rural habitats, with only a few living at ports and crossroads.

If you imagine people re-inhabiting the wide fields of agribusiness in small homes with big yards sporting homes for other critters, it looks more plausible to shift back toward a vibrant biosphere than trying to instantly

zap us all back to nature. Just this time we can use solar ovens instead of burning wood. We can move through small farming toward hunter/gathering societies with the comforts of appropriate technologies.

In case you're affronted by the proposal of regression to hunter/gathering societies as a goal for humans, consider that people in such communities took naps. They worked an average of 3 to 6 hours a day. The way humans live most lightly in the planet is as hunter/gathering migrators.

Such peoples enjoy an "economy of surplus," going to the place where there is abundance.

Granted, this economic analysis comes from Collins Turnbull's ethnography on the M'buti pygmies of Africa, where something is coming ripe at every season of the year and no one ever needs a parka. But the average working hours hold true across all habitats.

Perhaps we can work our way back through small farming to a biosphere that is healthy enough to support our future generations in lifestyles that are more relaxed and enjoyed in beauty. 🌸





# DO YOU SEE ANY FUCKS GROWING IN MY GARDEN?

BY SAGE LISKEY, RAD CAT PRESS

TODAY, I TOOK MY LITTLE SHOVEL  
AND EVER SO CAREFULLY  
WEEDED MY LITTLE GARDEN OF EVERY  
SINGLE  
LAST  
LITTLE  
FUCK.

I STARTED BY STABBING DEEPLY INTO THE MIND,  
LOOSENING THE ROOTS OF THAT FUCK  
THAT GREW LIKE HOT JEALOUSY IN LATE SUMMER

FUCK FACT:  
FUCKS SPREAD THROUGH ROOT,  
SEED,  
AND INVISIBILITY  
FACT.

THEN I STABBED AGAIN  
THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT FUCK  
GROWING LIKE  
FRIGID DEATH  
IN MID WINTER.

FUCK FACT:  
FUCKS GROW FAST.  
THEY TAKE OVER YOUR GARDEN.  
YOU MUST WEED THEM OUT BEFORE  
THEY EAT YOU ALIVE.  
FACT.

I EXPOSED THE ROOTS WITH MY HANDS,  
FINDING THAT FUCK FROM EARLY SPRING  
WHO LOOKED ALMOST INNOCENT.

FUCK FACT:  
WHEN A FUCK  
TAKES YOU OVER  
YOU SPREAD FUCKS  
TO OTHER GARDENS  
AND BECOME A FUCKER  
FACT.

AND THEN I GRABBED HOLD OF THE WHOLE FUCK,  
A SCARED DEMON IN THE FALL,  
IT SCREAMED NO AS I PULLED  
AND I THREW THAT FUCK IN THE FIRE  
BEFORE IT COULD GRAB HOLD.

NOW DO YOU SEE ANY FUCKS IN MY GARDEN?  
NONE, I'M GROWING A CROP OF PETUNIAS THIS YEAR,  
AND I JUST DON'T GIVE A FUCK.

# PLANTS make FRIENDS too

*By Anomalie Glade*

Plants have their own personalities...some are gentle, some are fierce like the chili pepper, some are friendly like legumes who wrap their tendrils around others like little hugs and some just want their space.



If you do not know what to do, work on growing community.  
If you do not know how, work on healing yourself.  
If you do not know why, go down to the river and cry.

—Sabra Marcroft

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Current agricultural and traditional gardening techniques of monocropping (planting one kind of plant) may produce a harvest, but it tends to require more fertilizer, reduces the abundance of fruits/vegetables and can dampen flavor.

Certain plants benefit each other when grown next to specific companions. Plants, like people, make friends too. They have their best friends they prefer to hangout with and “frenemies” who just aren’t their cup of tea. Creating biodiversity even in small space gardening can reduce the need for pesticides, facilitate more yield and enhance flavor. For instance, basil planted near tomatoes can improve both flavor and growth.

As humans, one could say our growth and flavor (attitudes and spirits) thrive when surrounded by certain people and wilt around others. We form communities and I like to

think of biodiverse ecosystems and companion planting as “plant communities.”

Sometimes in life we come across people that hinder our growth or well-being. Since plants have their own personalities too, certain varieties tend to repel each other. Brassicas and tomatoes don’t get along, and planting potatoes near tomatoes can make them “more susceptible to potato blight” (*Carrots Love Tomatoes*, pg 169).

Let’s build positive communities—both plant and human (and of course don’t forget our fuzzy or feathery animal friends huge contribution to communities!) May many plant communities benefit from your inspired hands! 🌻

*I recommend one of my favorite gardening books that focuses on companion planting: Carrots Love Tomatoes by Louise Riotte.*





# This zine was produced in Eugene, Oregon by the Avant Gardeners

**Z is for Zombie** *cover art by Lisa Snellings*

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## Art & Illustrations

**Zombie** *page 2* . . . Oliver Reddig

**Elizabethan Magestrate** *page 6* . . . 16th century woodcut

**Ginko Biloba** *page 7* . . . [www.oldbookillustrations.com](http://www.oldbookillustrations.com)

**Universal Mandala** *pages 8 & 9* . . . our collective consciousness

**Cascadia Eugene** *page 11* . . . Jeremy Spafford

**Resistance is Fertile** *page 12* . . . Cascadia Solidaria

**Carrot Loves Tomato** *page 14* . . . Anna Helena Jackson

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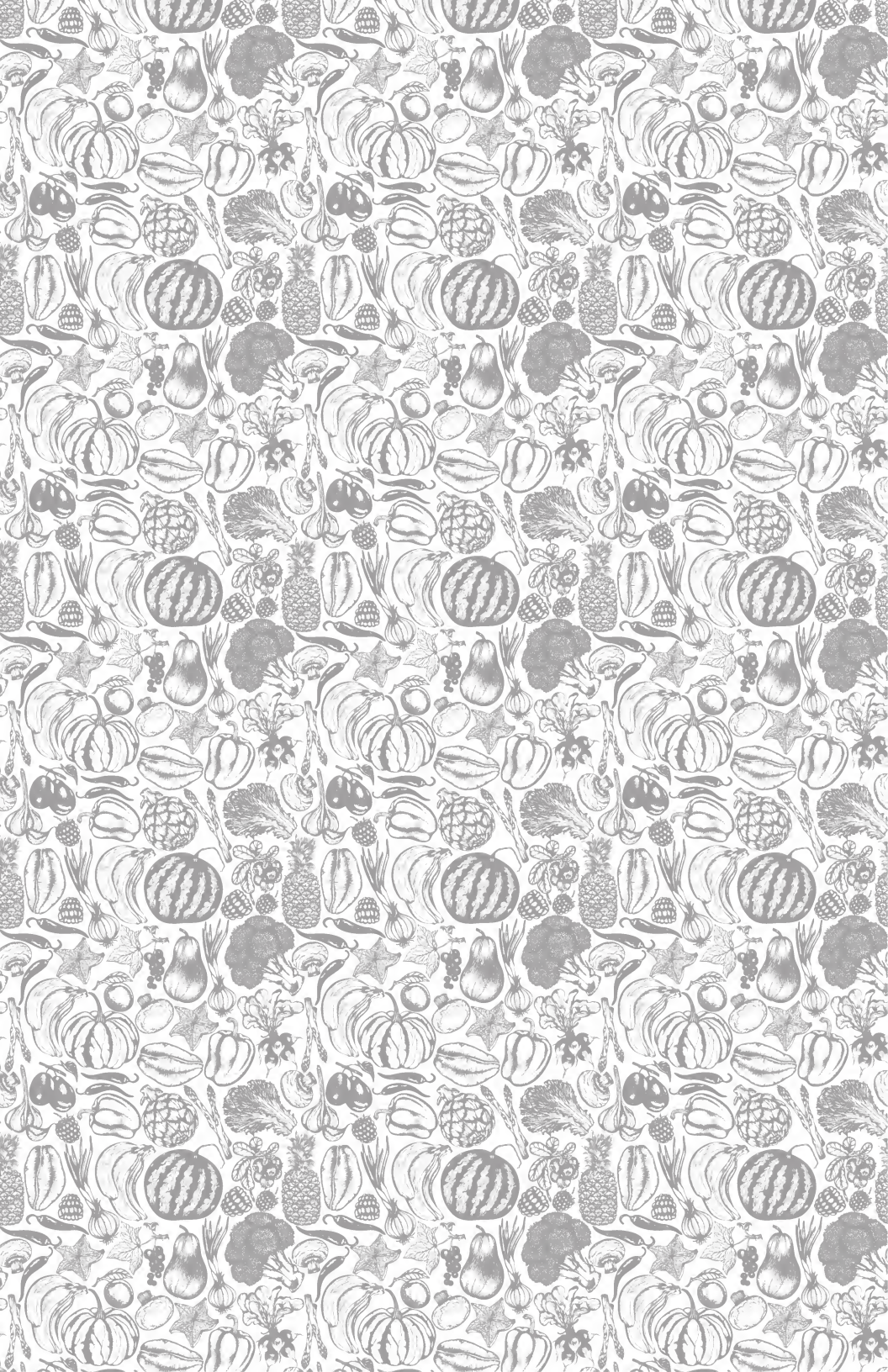
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and a very special thanks to our  
supporters and friends







*This issue is dedicated to the memory of  
our beloved Worm Whisperer,*

*Anthony Borelli.*

*Thank you for your dedicated service to the Eugene  
gardening community. You are greatly missed.*